(b) Yes, Sir. But it is not possible to give any financial assistance for strengthening and development of agricultural education as the Karnataka Veteiinary Animal and Fisheries Sciences University has came into existence from 01 Sept., 2004 when the 10th Five Year Plan in respect of Indian Council of Agricultural Research has already been finalized.

Technology Mission on Rice

4661. SHRI S. ANBALAGAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to launch a Technology Mission on rice/paddy so as to increase the production of rice and improve per hectare productivity of rice;

(b) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Central Government have taken note of the very low per hectare productivity of the paddy crop when compared to countries like Japan; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the steps being taken/proposed to be taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) and (b) No, Sir. Government is already implementing research and production programmes for increasing production and productivity of rice in the country. Hence there is no proposal to launch technology mission on rice.

(c) and (d) The Government of India is aware of the lower productivity of paddy in India as compared to countries like Japan. During 2001 the productivity of paddy in India was 2964 Kilogram per hectare (kg/ha) as against 7205 kg/ha in he United States of America (USA), 6659 kg/ha in Japan and 6350 kg/ha in China. The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is carrying out research for development of new high yielding varieties/hybrids and improved production technologies to increase productivity of paddy in the country.

A Centrally Sponsored Scheme on Integrated Cereals Development Programme in rice based cropping system areas (ICDP-Rice) is under implementation to increase rice production in the country. The scheme has been subsumed under Macro Management Mode of Agriculture'with effect from October 2000 to provide flexibility to States based on local needs. Under the scheme assistance is provided for propagation of

improved production technology, hybrid rice production technology, integrated pest management through field demonstrations; training of farmers including women; transfer of technology through electronic media and published literature; farm implements; installation of sprinkler irrigation system; varietal replacement; production of certified seeds, etc. Besides, frontline demonstrations are also organized by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) on farmers fields.

Growth of Agriculture Production

4662. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that in the first three years of the Tenth Five year Plan, the growth of agriculture production was below 1.5 per cent as against the target of 4.0 per cent;

(b) if so, the reasons for the shortfall of agriculture production;

(c) whether it is also a fact that Government had decided to reverse the deceleration in the last decade; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTILAL BHURIA): (a) Yes, Sir. According to the data released by Central Statistical Organization (CSO), the growth rate in agriculture, including allied sectors of forestry & logging, and fishing, was negative (-7%) in 2002-03 while it was 9.6% in 2003-04. According to the advance estimates released by the CSO, growth rate in agriculture, including allied sectors, in 2004-05 is 1.1%. The average annual growth rate for the first three years of the Tenth Plan works out to 1.2%.

(b) Since about 60 per cent of the net sown area is rain-fed, agricultural production, is heavily influenced by rainfall. The year 2002-03 witnessed a severe drought that affected several States in the country. The favourable rainfall from the southwest monsoon in 2003-04 boosted agricultural production. However, the rainfall from the south-west monsoon in the year 2004-05 was deficient across time and space. Though the deficiency in rainfall from the south-west monsoon in 2004 was less serious than that in 2002 both for the whole season and for the agriculturally important month of July, the kharif crop production in 2004-05 was adversely affected by deficient rainfall.